



Information Systems Strategy Formulation and Organizational Success in the Hospitality Industry in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated information systems strategy formulation and organizational success in hospitality industry in Port Harcourt. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey design. The population of the covered 185 managerial staff of the 28 hospitality firms studied, while the study sample size is 123 respondents as determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. The study data were obtained using structured questionnaire. Instrument was tested using the face and content validity, while the instrument reliability was ascertained using the Cronbach alpha reliability instrument. The hypotheses for the study were tested using the Spearman's rank order correlation. The findings revealed that information systems strategy formulation significantly relates with organizational success in hospitality industry in Port Harcourt. The study recommends that management of Rivers State hotels should follow an appropriate computer system approach that is appropriate for their market climate and consumer requirements.

Keywords: Information Systems Strategy Formulation Organizational Success Social System, Profitability and Patronage.

INTRODUCTION

Lashley and Morrison (2010) posit that the concept of hospitality is essentially a relationship based on hosts and guests. Therefore, Mahapa (2013) indicates that the hospitality industry covers a wide range of organizations offering food services and accommodation. The industry is however divided into sectors according to the skill-sets required for the work involved. These sectors include accommodation, food and beverage, meeting and events, gaming entertainment and recreational tourism services. In the same vein, Telfer (2006) characterized the nature of hospitality as the sharing of drink, food and shelter to people who actually are not permanent members of a household. Today, the hospitality industry is viewed as a powerful system of the regional economy and an important component of the tourism economy. The scholar went further to state that hospitality industry consists of hotels, motels, youth hostels and dormitories, apartments, tourist shelters, as well as the private sector involved in the tourist accommodation. Based on these definitions, it is clear that the hospitality industry is associated with businesses aimed at providing the visitors with accommodation, food, and organizing their leisure time.

Given the risen demand of the service offered by the hospitality firms, the industry is viewed is one of the fast growing industries in the world, which accounts for about 6% of the global gross domestic product and about 5% of total tax revenues, stimulating in addition, the development of other areas such as construction, trade, agriculture, consumer goods among others (Brotherton & Wood, 2000). Just like every other purposeful organization, hospitality organizations such as Three-Star hotels in Port Harcourt are also goal driven. According to Jaja, Gabriel and Wobodo (2019), these goals include profitability, growth and expansion, good citizenship, goodwill, survival and others, which are all indicators of organizational success. Practically, in organizational management literature, a successful organization is viewed as a performing organization. This is as an organization's ability to deliver on its purpose and objectives translate to success. Therefore, Richard et al. (2009) argued that organizational success has its focus on three specific areas of outcomes: first, financial performance

which involves the likes of profits, return on equity, etc.; second, product/service market performance involving the likes of market share, sales, business growth, etc.; and third, optimized shareholder return involving the likes of economic value added, total shareholder return, etc.

However, due to intense competition that characterizes today's business arena, achieving organizational success is not an easy feat to actualize and sustain without the management of the organization creating the enabling environment to foster it. Amid different strategies and tools that managers could use to drive organizational success agenda, the use of information system strategy formulation is considered critical. This is because information strategy acts as the linchpin between the business strategy and the information system strategy (Sharma & Hannafin, 2007). It answers the questions: what information is required? Information systems strategy is defined as the process of identifying a portfolio of computer-based applications which when put into practice will positively align with corporate strategy (Benkler, 2006). This is to create an advantage over competitors. It is the course of recognizing the information systems (IS) needs of an organization at a high level. The success to this direction relies on identifying a portfolio of computer-based applications that assists an organization to execute its business plans and realizing its business goals.

Information system strategy certifies that new systems are installed in a method that will provide for the organisational strategic aim. It also questions the appropriateness of the critical assumptions behind the business strategy in light of the changing environment and changing perceptions. Information strategy is concerned with applications and platforms, that is, the 'nuts and bolts' of how to provide the information. Thus, it deals with technological infrastructure necessary to fulfill the requirements of the information strategy formulation. The Information Management Strategy captures how the information services are organised for the different facets of the Institution (i.e., centralised, distributed, out-sourced) and policy issues such as who gets access and what level of access they receive. Information system strategy formulation entails building an organizational business model and interprets that model into integrated systems. The information systems architecture is relates the business processes that are needed to perform an appropriate information systems design which include the data processing and services for all users and it is done with least possible redundancy in process and data modeling across the entire organization.

According to Rodian (2012) to achieve optimal results, policies, processes, and procedures are required to be in control of the organizational information system globally and locally which referred to as global best practices. Again, to develop strategic solution to enhance the organization performance in the area of information systems, processes, training, and adaption to organizational and culture changes are required.

The companies must develop customer relationship especially in the local countries to gain customer's loyalty to enhance business growth in those countries (Rodian, 2012). Organizational strategies drive the information systems requirements and information system strategies model the information systems architecture which is led by technology resources and evolution. Planning for information systems architecture should include the implications of organization strategic plan and the organizational objectives on a strategic setting of information system technology (Bakos & Treacy, 2006). The system implementation starts with the notion of information systems architecture which guides the implementation in the integration between the subsystems. Therefore, a complete system implementation plan should include the development strategy, project scope and the impact on the organization. Furthermore, the project's time frame, the cost, and the expected benefits need to be defined as well. To minimize the risk of the project, the control system has to be adjusted as part of the risk assessment (Monplaisir, Riordan & Benjamin, 2009).

Information systems strategy involves social systems. Social systems are information systems based on social technologies and open collaboration. Social systems are different from traditional business information systems, for which the term "information system" has often been used implicitly. They shift the core system function from work support to online social interaction (e.g., the system allows for comment, rating, "friending," and similar feedback mechanisms) or open collaboration (i.e., the number of contributors or participants in the system is not predefined). Social computing tools such as social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), are the technology core of social information systems. It is argued that understanding technology as only a part of larger systems and processes in organizations is the most important reason or purpose of the discipline (Lee, 2010). Hence, we review the literature from an organization process perspective rather than a technology perspective. In this study, we

identify generic features of how social information systems differ from traditional information systems and organize the literature on social information systems according to the supported process types. Social information systems are increasingly used in both pleasure-seeking and practical ways: The use of social media has become a favorite free-time activity for Internet users. Unlike with other forms of media, users can actively contribute and co-create in social media. Hence, we see various forms of autonomous user co-creation emerging on the Internet (Zwass, 2010), effectively constituting a new and firm-independent method of production (Benkler, 2006). Furthermore, firms are increasingly using open, social, and collaborative processes for their value-creation activities and for communication between users (consumers) and employees.

However, as organizations strive toward achieving organizational success, a number of instruments and strategies have been adopted. But among these tools and strategies adopted, we have not seen any study within the context of hospital industry in Port Harcourt that utilized information systems strategy formulation as precursor of organizational success. This is as majority of these studies adopted predictor variables other than information system strategy formulation. For instance, Domfeh (2012) examined the impact of employee retention strategies on the performance of selected rural banks in Ashanti Region in Ghana. Sofijanov and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) investigated employee involvement and organizational performance of manufacturing sector in Republic of Macedonia, while Teo (2016) examines the impact of goal setting on employee effectiveness to improve organisation effectiveness in a high-tech company in Singapore. Based on this identified gap, it is the interest of this study is empirically examines the relationship between information systems strategy formulation and organizational success in hospitality industry in Port Harcourt.

Furthermore, this study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. How does social system relate with profitability of hospitality industry in Port Harcourt?
- ii. How does social system relate with patronage in hospitality industry in Port Harcourt?

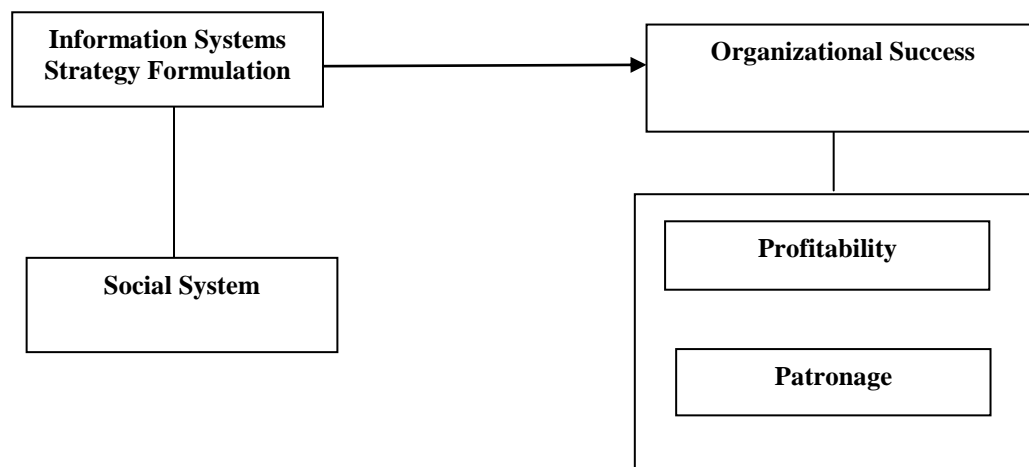


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework for the relationship between Information Systems Strategy Formulation and Organizational Success.

Source: Desk Research (2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Workplace Learning Theory

This study anchored its theory on workplace learning theory developed from Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984) using knowledge management approach and problem solving from work practice (Realin, 2008). The study adopted this theory because of its proximity to technology which is acquired through learning in the work place. Levy, Oates, Hunt and Dobson (1989) defined work-based learning as "linking learning to the work role". The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2005) states that work-based learning is "a self-directed, work-based process leading to increased adaptive capacity. Individual 'learn to learn' and possess the capabilities that enable them to do so to help to build and retain competitive advantage". Realin (2008) argues that

work-based learning expressly acquires in action and dedicate to the work task with experiences. He goes on to argue that workplace offers as many opportunities for learning as studying in the classroom. Moreover, Bruge et al. (2012) researching in UK organizations recorded that staff could develop their skill while they work in their workplace, this research found that work experiences can help staff to improve their skill and confidence. Lester and Costley (2010) refer work-based learning logically as “any learning situated in the workplace or arises directly out of workplace concern”. Gray (2001) identifies the terms work-based learning in various forms.

Each form has different pedagogic approaches learning and development method such as action learning, coaching delegation, discussion board and group, projects, reflective practice (Clifford & Thrope, 2007; Shaw, Rout & Wise, 2011). There are various types of work-based learning activities such as Internship, Community Service Program, Cooperative Education Experience, and Tech Prep Program (Swail & Kampits, 2004). Different types are utilized differently depending on objective and target group. The concept of work-based learning in this paper utilizes Realin (2008) model based on Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory and Honey and Mumford’s learning cycle. These can help the learner for reasoning and reflecting in work context (Durant et al., 2009) both in individual and collective level (Realin, 2008) under supervision of mentors. Evaluation processes involve discussion, observation and reflection of learner within workplace (Stenström & Tynjälä, 2009; Gaskell & Beaton, 2010).

Information System Strategy Formulation

Information system strategy formulation is an essential feature in corporate and information technology (IT) world. In a nutshell, it is the entire process of identifying and selecting appropriate information system to enable organizational success. The information systems of an organization consist of the information technology infrastructure, data, application systems, and personnel that employ IT to deliver information and communications services in an organization (Davis 2000). Meanwhile, the term information systems also refer to the management of the organizational function in charge of planning, designing, developing, implementing, and operating the systems and providing services (Davis 2000).

Thus, the concept of IS combines both the technical components and human activities within the organization as well as describes the process of managing the life cycle of organizational IS practices (Avgerou & McGrath, 2007). Over the past two decades, IS has continued to grow in importance. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal (Worthen, 2007) indicated that 87 percent of business leaders believe that information system is critical to their strategic success. Furthermore, IS spending still represents a major portion of organizational budgets, especially for organizations in IS intensive industries. For instance, a recent study conducted by the Tower Group (Cone, 2005) predicted that firms in the IS intensive financial services sector are expected to collectively invest over \$450 billion in IS by 2010.

Social systems

Effective communication is widely accepted as a basic aspect of organizational social system that people needed to be succeeding in a workplace (Schulz, 2008; Evans, Waite & Admasachew, 2008). The social system is the human aspect of information system strategy. It is the level of human interaction between the internal and external customers of the hostel or organization. Nowadays, power of modern media and ubiquity of communication that affect people all over areas including education. For many years, several countries have been interested in developing and preparing staff to adopt technology for communication skills. For example, the National Association for the Hotellers (NAEYC, 2012), states that early staff of hotels should know variety of communication skills and use technology as a professional resource to communicate within the hotel organization. The framework describes that the expected increasing levels of knowledge and skill in each area of qualification including organizational staff. Developing abilities of them require use of method of instruction that take ability of younger staff in communication, higher order thinking skills, and preparation through the use of information system (MOE, 2011).

Organizational Success

The initiation of information strategy (IS) strategy must be linked with an established business strategy (Atkins 1994; Hatten & Hatten, 1997), or what Mintzberg (1987) labeled as a position. For example, if a company has chosen a market development strategy following Ansoff’ (1965) strategic framework (i.e., growth vector), the IS strategy would entail those strategic IS resources that are

deemed to support market development (Atkins, 1994). Or, if a company has chosen a cost leadership business strategy following Porter (1980) generic strategy framework, the IS strategy would need to be enhanced to augur with the internal operations to suit its customer needs. Organizations need both inspirational leaders and sound managers. In order to achieve increased and sustainable results, organizations need to execute strategies and engage employees. Success is measured by analyzing where the organization is in regards to its goals and its mission (Burge, 2012). The continuing struggle to define organizational success was recently reflected in the Conference Board's report on "New Corporate Performance Measures". This report discussed the increasing corporate focus on performance, along with the inadequacies of traditional financial measures in the dynamic turbulent environment of today.

Profitability

Quite a few dependent variables are used to measure the profitability : 1) the ratio of net profit before tax over capital and reserves; 2) the ratio of net profit after tax over capital and reserves; 3) the ratio of net profit before tax over capital, reserves and total borrowings; 4) the ratio of net profit before tax over total assets; 5) the ratio of net profit before tax and staff expenses over total assets; 6) the ratio of net profit before tax, staff expenses and provision for loan losses over total assets. With regard to the determinants of profitability, we can say in a nutshell that profitability is the excess of sales over expenditure.

Nimalathasan (2009) mentioned that the profit is the primary objective of a business, which measures not only the success of a product, but also of the development of the market for it. Further profit is the report card of the past, the inventive gold star for the future. Weidenfeld and Nicholson (1970) concerned that the profit as a reward to owner of the capital but with the return to capital as an objective of a firm's activities. Velnamby and Nimalathasan (2009) noticed the profitability will provide more accurate view of the firm's performance. Pandy (1979) indicated that recent experience in countries with totally planned economies indicated that economists are probably right in emphasizing the importance of overall profitability as a criterion for the efficient operation of an enterprise. Weston (1978) declared that the profit is use to test the efficiency and use to measure the control and worth of the investment to the owners, margin of safety to the creditors, source of extreme benefits to the employees, to the Government a measure of taxable capacity and the basis of legislative action, to the country profits are an index of economic progress, national income generated and rise in the standard of living.

Patronage

Generally, patronage is the support, encouragement, privilege or financial aid that is bestowed on organization or individuals by customers. For an organization to be successful is it dependent on the level of patronage. Patronage is measure by amount of sales. In the hospitality industry, patronage is measure using amount times guests visit tourist centre which includes hotels, motels, and pleasure sites among others. The hospitality industry like any other industry has been affected by so many sensitive and uncontrollable events in the past decade. Experience such as the event of the Tsunami Tlida wave in South Asia and Africa 2004, London bombing by terrorists 2005, economic recession in the United Kingdom and United State including Nigeria are events that affect the influx of tourist to this destination (Clark & Chen, 2007). Despite the fact that the choice of destinations depends on the stability of economy of regions, the hospitality industry especially the hotel sector in this regions did not take long to revitalize, United Nation Tourism Organization (UNWTO'S).

Relationship between Information System Strategy Formulation and Organizational Success

Information research efforts have been examined from a variety of perspectives, including their diversity, (Benbasat & Weber, 1996), the need for high quality and impactful research (e.g., Agarwal and Lucas, 2005), and their focus on the IT artefact (DeSanctis, 2003; Orlikowski & Barley, 2001). Yet, two questions continue to preoccupy IS researchers: 1) the discipline's core identity and its boundaries (Lyytinen & King, 2006; Sidorova et al., 2008; Watson, 2014); 2) the relevance of IS research to practice (Ginzberg, 2012; Niederman et al., 2015). In order to address the first issue, some researchers have examined the IS topics that have been studied by identifying the themes covered in top IS journals (Sidorova et al., 2008), but without empirically identifying how much or how often IS researchers have studied which constructs and relationships.

The study postulates the following hypotheses to be tested:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between social system and profitability in hospitality industry in Port Harcourt.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between social system and patronage in hospitality industry in Port Harcourt.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey design. The population of the covered 185 managerial staff of the 28 hospitality firms studied, while the study sample size is 123 respondents as determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. The study data were obtained using structured questionnaire. Instrument was tested using the face and content validity, while the instrument reliability was ascertained using the Cronbach alpha reliability instrument. Descriptive analysis on the demographic data was assessed using simple frequencies and percentage distributions. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient is calculated using the SPSS 21.0 version to establish the relationship among the empirical referents of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variable.

Table 1: Correlations for Social System and Measures of Organizational Success

			Social System	Profitability	Patronage
Spearman's rho	Social System	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.859**	.787**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	170	170	170
	Profitability	Correlation Coefficient	.859**	1.000	.846**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	170	170	170
	Patronage	Correlation Coefficient	.787**	.846**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	170	170	170

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between social system and profitability in hospitality industry in Rivers State.

The result of correlation matrix obtained between social system and profitability was shown in Table 1. Similarly displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. The correlation coefficient of 0.859 confirms the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a positive very strong correlation between the variables. The tests of significance shows that that this relationship is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.01$. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between social system and profitability in hospitality industry in Rivers State.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between social system and patronage in hospitality industry in Rivers State.

The result of correlation matrix obtained between social system and patronage was shown in Table 1. Similarly displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. The correlation coefficient of 0.787 confirms the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a positive strong correlation between the variables. The tests of significance shows that that this relationship is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.01$. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is

hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between social system and patronage in hospitality industry in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated the relationship between information system strategy formulation and organizational success in hospitality industry in Rivers State. The findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between information system strategy formulation and organizational success in hospitality industry in Rivers State. ICT plays major role in the general organizational productivity. The finding of the study assert statement made by Schulz works together to prove that successful collaboration, a crucial feature of social networks, is generally recognized as a basic aspect of corporate social structure that individuals need to excel in a workplace. In River State, social systems are leading or connected to organizational performance in the hospitality industry (Schulz, 2008; Evans, Waite & Admasachew, 2008).

The human component of the information system approach is the social system. It is the degree of human contact between the hostel's internal and external customers. Modern communication capacity and ubiquity impact citizens in all fields, including schooling. Several countries have been involved in improving and training workers for implementing information technologies for several years. The National Hotellers' Association (NAEYC, 2012) says, for example, that hotel workers can recognize the different communication skills and utilize computers as technical communication tools within the hotel organisation. This relates to hotel employees.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been shown that the formulation of information management policy is essential for the growth of hospitality information systems in Rivers State. People (social) ought to be incorporated into the information system formulation. People, all workers and clients should be properly supported and educated by selecting the right information system formulation for the performance of the business. This study therefore concludes that information system strategies (social system) significantly relates with organizational success of hospitality firms in Port Harcourt.

Based on the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested.

Management of Rivers State hotels should follow an appropriate computer system approach that is appropriate for their market climate and consumer requirements.

Workers and clients in their respective hotel organizations should be involved in the formulation of information framework for the hospitality industry management of the Rivers State.

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